

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 26, 2004. Claims 1, 4-7, 11, 13, and 15 have been amended. Claims 2, 3, and 14 have been canceled. Claim 16 has been added. Claims 1, 4-13, 15 and 16 are now pending in this case. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications.

Figure 3 stands objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(4). The objection is respectfully traversed. The specification has been amended to recite a "communication device 12" rather than a "communicator 12." Figure 3 is now in full compliance with § 1.84 and the objection should be withdrawn.

Figure 7A stands objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). The objection is respectfully traversed. Concurrently filed herewith is a Submission of Replacement Sheet of Drawings (FIGS. 7A-7D). FIG. 7A now respectively illustrates an icon labeled, "Non-display of bags." Accordingly, the objection should be withdrawn.

The specification stands objected to because of an informality. The objection is respectfully traversed. The specification has been amended to recite "another" rather than "a other," as requested by the Examiner, and the objection should be withdrawn.

The title of the invention stands objected to as not being descriptive. The title of the invention has been amended to recite "INFORMATION DISPLAY METHOD AND INFORMATION DISPLAY SYSTEM FOR FINDING ANOTHER USER IN A PLURALITY OF USERS BASED UPON REGISTERED INFORMATION." The objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 6-7, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 3 has been canceled. Claims 6-7 and 11 have been amended in response to the rejection and are in full compliance with § 112. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-7 and 10-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Cheng (U.S. Patent No. 6,329,986). The rejection is respectfully traversed and Applicants request reconsideration.

Amended claim 1 recites “transferring information about the plurality of users from the server to the terminal of the user; and differently displaying display contents of information about each user displayed on the terminal of the user, on the basis of registration contents of information about the user, wherein the information about each user includes a file for describing a model in place of each user within a virtual space shared by the plurality of users, and the virtual space where the model corresponding to each user exists is displayed at the terminal of the user, and wherein the information about each user includes an interest level of each user in at least one item, and a figure of the model at the level of each user is differently displayed based on a user’s interest level about the item.” (emphasis added).

Similarly, claim 13 recites “a server for registering information about a plurality of users, and at least one terminal connected to the server via a network, the terminal being of a user of the plurality of users for displaying information about the plurality of users, wherein the server transferred the information about the plurality of users to the terminal of the user, and the terminal of the user differently displays display contents of information about each user on the basis of registration contents of information about the user, wherein the information about each user includes a file for

describing a model in place of each user within a virtual space shared by the plurality of users, and wherein the virtual space where the model corresponding to each user exists is displayed on the terminal of the user." (emphasis added).

Cheng fails to disclose or suggest displaying contents of information or a system displaying contents of information about a plurality of users on the basis of the registered information of the terminal user. Cheng discloses a system that comprises a priority component. Objects and avatars are prioritized. Thus, objects and avatars with higher priority have enhanced resolution and rendering enabling them to be more life-like in a virtual environment.

In contrast, Applicants' invention discloses a system in which a user can find other users with common interests and hobbies. A user registers his/her information and based upon that information, any other users can view the registered information on their own display and locate users with common interests.

The Office Action cites Cheng's col. 4, lines 57-65 as support for disclosure of "differently displaying display contents of information about each user displayed on the terminal of the user, on the basis of registration contents of information about the user." (Office Action, pg. 4). However, contrary to the Office Action's assertion, Cheng's col. 4, lines 57-65 recites that "the screen 28 images the participant's avatar, other avatars 17 and a non-avatar object 19."

Cheng defines an avatar as follows: "Avatar, as used herein, refers to a virtual object that represents, and is controlled by, a participant. An avatar typically supports, e.g., one or more of body gestures, facial expressions, speech, and emotion. An avatar, while so representing and supporting, can be other than anthropomorphic

and can compromise a combination of both animate and inanimate virtual objects.” (Col. 3, lines 26-32). (emphasis added). In Cheng, the user merely sees an object representing another user and does not see registered information about that user.

In Applicants’ invention, information is transferred about a plurality of users registered in a server, to the terminal of a user and displays contents of information about each user displayed on the terminal of the user, on the basis of registration contents of information about the user. Consequently, Cheng merely discloses an avatar, e.g., an image of an animate or inanimate object, and does not display information based on the registration contents of a user.

Claims 4-7 and 10-12 depend from claim 1. Claim 14 depends from claim 13. All of the dependent claims should be allowable along with claims 1 and 13 for at least the reasons provided above, and for other reasons.

Claims 8-9 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheng in view of Farmer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,476,830). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 8 and 9 should be allowable at least for reasons similar to those discussed above. In particular, Cheng does not disclose or suggest that “the terminal of the user differently displays display contents of information about each user on the basis of registration contents of information about the user,” as recited in claim 1. Farmer is relied upon for disclosing virtual sales activities and adds nothing to recitify the deficiencies of Cheng.

In addition, neither Cheng nor Farmer, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests “[a] game method for communicating via a network with a virtual character presented by a server, the method comprising the steps of: preparing parameters of each of a plurality of users communicating with the virtual character; and varying the parameters of each user depending on the progress of communication of each user with the virtual character, wherein said virtual character has information about each of said plurality of users; and informing each user a response from the virtual character corresponding to the parameters by an electronic mail at a predetermined timing,” as recited in claim 15 (emphasis added).

Moreover, the cited references do not teach or suggest an information display method comprising “transferring information about the plurality of users from the server to the terminal of the user; and differently displaying display contents of information about each user displayed on the terminal of the user, on the basis of registration contents of information about the user, wherein the information about each user includes a file for describing a model in place of each user within a virtual space shared by the plurality of users, and the virtual space where the model corresponding to each user exists is displayed at the terminal of the user,” as recited in new claim 16.

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In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Thomas J. D'Amico

Registration No.: 28,371

DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN &

OSHINSKY LLP

2101 L Street NW

Washington, DC 20037-1526

(202) 785-9700

Attorneys for Applicants